CLAIMS

1. A cutting tool subassembly for a folding hand tool, comprising:

(a) a jaw having a base;

(b) a blade assembly, including a blade carrier having a tang and a sharpened cutter mounted removably on said blade carrier;

(c) a blade pivot joint interconnecting said jaw with said blade carrier, said jaw and said blade carrier being movable relative to each other about said blade pivot joint;

(d) a first handle connected to said base of said jaw by a first handle pivot joint and movable about said first handle pivot joint between an extended, operative position and a folded position with respect to said jaw; and

(e) a second handle connected to said tang of said blade carrier by a second handle pivot joint and movable about said second handle pivot joint between an extended, operative position and a folded position with respect to said blade carrier.

2. The subassembly of claim 1 wherein said first handle includes an abutment face at an end thereof adjacent said first handle pivot joint, and wherein said tang includes a main portion and a leg extending from said main portion, said leg being aligned with said abutment face and resting against said abutment face when said first handle is in said extended operative position.

3. The subassembly of claim 2 wherein said first handle includes a channel having a pair of side walls and a base interconnecting said

side walls and defining said abutment face.

4. The subassembly of claim 1 wherein said jaw is a bypass support jaw and said cutter is a bypass cutting blade arranged to cooperate with said jaw, and wherein said cutting tool is a pruning shear.

5. The subassembly of claim 1 wherein each of said handles defines a respective channel having a pair of channel side walls, said channels facing inwardly toward each other when said handles are in their folded positions and facing outwardly apart from each other when said handles are in their extended positions with respect to said jaw and said blade, and wherein each of said side walls of one of said handles includes cushioning portions of an elastomeric material overlying and extending along a margin thereof.

6. The subassembly of claim 5 wherein one of said channel side walls includes a supporting portion of metal and a molded shell layer of a rigid thermoplastic material attached thereto, and wherein said cushioning portions are molded over said shell layer.

7. The subassembly of claim 5 wherein said cushioning portions are molded onto said margins of said side walls.

8. The subassembly of claim 1 wherein said blade pivot joint includes a tension screw and a locknut adjustably engaged therewith, said tension screw and locknut being arranged to keep said blade assembly and said jaw suitably closely alongside each other.

9. The subassembly of claim 1 wherein said cutter portion includes a hook portion at an outer end thereof, said hook portion facing openly away from said jaw and having a throat including a sharpened edge.

10. The subassembly of claim 1, said jaw defining a cavity surrounding said blade pivot joint, and said subassembly including a spring located within said cavity, said spring having a pair of opposite ends, a first of said opposite ends being engaged with said jaw, and the other of said opposite ends being engaged with said blade carrier, and said spring urging said jaw and said blade to pivot apart from each other about said blade pivot joint.

11. The subassembly of claim 1, including a blade safety lock carried on one of said handles and movable between an engaged position in which said blade safety lock holds said jaw in a closed position with respect to said blade assembly, and a disengaged position in which said jaw and said blade assembly are free to move between said closed position and an open position, said blade safety lock being arranged with respect to one of said handles so that said one of said handles urges said blade lock into said engaged position when said one of said handles approaches said folded position thereof.

12. A blade-locking subassembly for a folding multipurpose tool, comprising:

(a) a jaw;

(b) a blade having a tang;

(c) a blade pivot joint interconnecting said jaw operatively with said blade, said jaw being movable about said blade pivot joint with respect to said blade, between an open position and a closed position;

(d) a handle pivot on said tang;

(e) a handle attached to said tang by said handle pivot and movable about said handle pivot between an extended position and a folded position with respect to said blade;

(f) a blade lock carried on a lock pivot and movable about

said lock pivot, between an engaged position, in which said blade lock holds said jaw in said closed position with respect to said blade, and a disengaged position in which said jaw is free to move between said open position and said closed position, said blade lock being arranged with respect to said handle so that said handle pushes said blade lock and urges said blade lock into said engaged position when said handle approaches said folded position thereof with respect to said blade.

13. The subassembly of claim 12 wherein said jaw and said blade are arranged as a bypass shear.

14. The subassembly of claim 12 wherein said jaw has a shoulder and said blade lock includes a catch body moveable to selectively engage said shoulder and thereby hold said jaw in said closed position when said blade lock is in said engaged position.

15. A subassembly for a folding hand tool, comprising:

(a) a jaw having a base;

(b) a blade assembly having a tang;

(c) a blade pivot joint interconnecting said jaw with said blade assembly, said blade assembly being movable about said blade pivot joint with respect to said jaw between an open position and a closed position;

(d) a first handle attached to said tang, said first handle including an abutment face;

(e) a second handle attached to said base of said jaw;

(f) a first handle pivot joint interconnecting said first handle with said blade assembly, said first handle being movable about said handle pivot joint between an extended

position and a folded position with respect to said blade assembly; and

(g) a leg extending from said tang and engaged against said abutment face when said first handle is in said extended position.

16. The subassembly of claim 15 wherein said first handle includes a channel having a channel base and a pair of side walls, and wherein said abutment face is a part of said channel base and said leg extends along and in contact with said abutment face when said first handle is in said extended position.

17. The subassembly of claim 16 wherein said tang is generally planar and oriented parallel with one of said side walls of said channel and said leg is parallel with said channel base.

18. The subassembly of claim 17 wherein said tang of said blade assembly and said leg are included in a single piece of sheet metal and said leg is formed by being bent out of a plane including said tang.

19. The subassembly of claim 15 wherein said first handle includes a channel having a pair of side walls and a channel base defining said abutment face, and wherein said tang includes a main portion and said leg extends at an angle away from said main portion and is aligned with said abutment face and rests against said abutment face when said first handle is in said extended position.

20. A subassembly for a folding hand tool, comprising:

(a) a jaw having a base;

(b) a blade including a tang;

(c) a blade pivot joint interconnecting said jaw with said

blade;

(d) a first handle connected to said base of said jaw by a first handle pivot joint and movable about said first handle pivot joint between an extended position and a folded position with respect to said jaw;

(e) a second handle connected to said tang of said blade by a second handle pivot joint and movable about said second handle pivot joint between an extended position and a folded position with respect to said blade; and

(f) wherein said handles define channels having channel side walls directed inwardly toward each other when said handles are in their respective folded positions and directed outwardly apart from each other when said handles are extended with respect to said jaw and said blade, and wherein each of said side walls of one of said handles includes cushioning portions of elastomeric material extending along a respective margin of each of said side walls and providing cushioning for gripping said handle.

21. The subassembly of claim 20 wherein said cushioning portions are overmolded onto said side walls of said channel.

22. A cutting tool subassembly for a folding hand tool, comprising:

(a) a jaw having a base;

(b) a blade having a tang and a sharpened edge;

(c) a blade pivot joint interconnecting said jaw with said blade, said jaw and said blade being movable relative to each other about said blade pivot joint;

(d) a first handle connected to said base of said jaw by a first

handle pivot joint and movable about said first handle pivot joint between an extended position and a folded position with respect to said jaw;

(e) a second handle connected to said tang of said blade by a second handle pivot joint and movable about said second handle pivot joint between an extended position and a folded position with respect to said blade; and

(f) said jaw defining a cavity surrounding said blade pivot joint, and said subassembly including a spring located within said cavity, said spring having a pair of opposite ends, a first of said opposite ends being engaged with said jaw, and the other of said ends being engaged with said blade, and said spring urging said jaw and said blade to pivot apart from each other about said blade pivot joint.

23. A handle for a folding multipurpose tool, comprising:

(a) an elongate metal channel member having a base and a pair of side walls each having an elongate margin spaced apart from said base;

(b) a shell layer of a rigid plastics material attached to an exterior surface of one of said side walls of said pair of said channel members; and

(c) a cushioning portion attached to said shell layer.

24. The handle of claim 23 wherein said shell layer extends along said base and both of said side walls of said pair.

25. The handle of claim 23 wherein said shell layer extends along said elongate margin of said one of said side walls of said pair.

26. The handle of claim 23 wherein said cushioning portion is of an elastomeric material and extends along an outer margin of said shell layer.

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27. The handle of claim 23 wherein said cushioning portion covers a portion of an outer face of said shell layer and a portion of an outer margin of said shell layer.